

sup 39a/38

# A P P R O C L A M A T I O N.

Tho. Cantuar. J. Sommers C. S. Pembroke C. P. S. Devonshire. Shrewsbury. Dorset. Godolphin.



Whereas it hath been Represented unto Us by the Levant Company, That they have reason to fear that some of his Majesties Subjects, who have Authority to Seize the Ships, Goods and Merchandizes belonging to the French King and his Subjects, and such Ships, Vessels and Goods as are liable to Confiscation, may, by Colour thereof, take other Ships and Goods of Subjects of other Princes and States in Amity with his Majesty: And Whereas We have also been Informed that divers of his Majesties Subjects have betaken themselves to the Sea-Service of Foreign Princes and States in Amity with his Majesty; and also that others of his Majesties Subjects, having his Majesties Commission to Seize the Ships and Goods of the French, have also taken Commissions from other Princes and States for Seizing the Goods of other Foreigners who are in Enmity with such Princes or States; by Colour whereof they pretend to make Prize not only of the Goods of his Majesties Enemies; and such as are liable to Confiscation, but also of other Goods of some of his Majesties Friends or Allies, if they happen to fall in their Way, whereby such Persons having such several Commissions may be Liable to the Punishment due to Pirates, and such their Proceedings may be of dangerous Consequence to all that Trade on the Sea: We being willing to provide against such enormous Practices, and likewise to Evidence upon all Occasions the particular Consideration We have for all his Majesties Friends and Allies, as well as his own Trading Subjects, have thought fit, by the Advice of his Majesties Privy Council, hereby strictly to Prohibit and Forbid all his Majesties Subjects, who have any Commission or Commissions to Seize the Ships and Goods of the Subjects of the French King, and such other Ships, Goods and Merchandizes as shall be liable to Confiscation, according to the Treaties between his Majesty and other Princes and States, that they do not, upon Pretence or Colour thereof, Seize the Ships, Goods or Merchandizes of others, which are not liable to Confiscation according to the aforesaid Treaties; or if any such Ships or Goods shall happen to be Seized upon just Cause of Suspicion, that after it shall Legally appear that the same do belong to his Majesties Friends or Allies, and are not liable to Confiscation, as aforesaid, that such his Majesties Subjects do forbear to keep or detain the same, or to take away any such Goods so belonging to his Majesties Friends or Allies. And We do also hereby strictly Command and Require, That no Officer or Mariner whatsoever, being his Majesties Subject, do presume to put himself into the Martial Sea-Service of any Foreign Prince or State, or to Accept of, or Execute, or Serve under any Commission of War, or Letter of Marque, or Reprisal, from any such Prince or State, or in any other Ship or Vessel than such as do belong to his Majesty or his Subjects, without Leave from his Majesty, or the Lord High Admiral, or the Commissioners for Executing the Office of Lord High Admiral for the time being, in due form obtained. And We do hereby Charge and Command all Officers, Mariners and Seafaring Men whatsoever, who are now in such Foreign Sea-Service, to leave the same forthwith, upon Pain of their being Repented and Punished as Pirates. And We do hereby Charge and Require all English Consuls, Agents, and other Ministers Residing with any of his Majesties Friends and Allies, that they cause due Publication hereof to be made, and that they use all Lawful Ways and Means to Discover and Suppress all Offenders against this Our Proclamation. And We also Require all Vice-Admirals, and Commanders of his Majesties Ships of War, and Officers in Ports and Maritime Places, to Apprehend and Seize such of his Majesties Subjects who shall continue to Serve in any Foreign Man of War or Privateer, or under any Foreign Commission at Sea, and neglect to return upon these Our Summons; and that they send Certificates thereof with all speed to his Majesties High Court of Admiralty, to the end that the Offender or Offenders may be Proceeded against according to the Laws in that behalf provided.

Given at the Council Chamber at Whitehall, the Eight and Twentieth Day of May, 1696. In the Eighth Year of His Majesties Reign.

God save the King.

L O N D O N, Printed by Charles Bill, and the Executrix of Thomas Newcomb, deceased, Printers to the Kings most Excellent Majesty. 1696.